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AGO D/A ltr, 29 Apr 1980

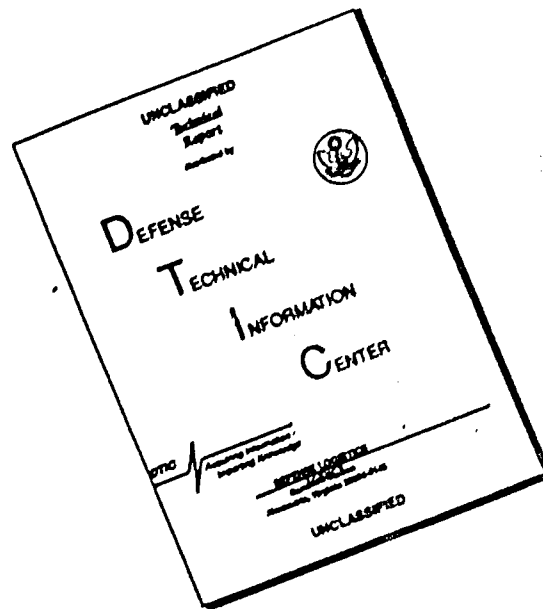
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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

SUBJECT

TO:

IN REPLY REFER TO

15 November 1966

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- BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

KENNETH G. WICKHAM  
Major General, USA  
The Adjutant General

JAN 9 1966

The Adjutant General

JAN 9 1966

STATESIDE

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EBB-CO

15 Aug 66

SUBJECT: Operational Report on Lessons Learned for Period 1 May 1966 to 31 July 1966 (RUS CSGPO -28 (R-1))

tunnel destruction support to the Royal Australian Regiment and other units located in the tactical area of responsibility of II FFV, to begin on or about 25 June 1966, to participate in the destruction of tunnels in the Long Phuoc area. The tunnel destruction teams' actual departure was on 19 June 1966 and arriving in the Long Phuoc area on 20 June 1966 and remaining there until 7 July 1966. A total of 300 meters of tunnel was destroyed during this operation. In addition to the actual tunnel destruction, our personnel trained Australian Engineers and United States Marines on the system.

On 20 July 1966 a tunnel destruction team consisting of one officer and six enlisted men departed for Tuy Hoa to support the 45th Engineer Group in tunnel destruction. At the end of the reporting period the team was still at Tuy Hoa.

On 26 July 1966 the Cu Chi Base Camp underwent a mortar attack. No rounds fell in the 588th Engineer Battalion area. Also on 26 July 1966, the battalion received a mission to repair an airfield at Vo Dat to enable the 173rd Brigade and elements of the 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division to return by C-130 aircraft.

A platoon from Company C, 588th Engineer Battalion, flew to Vo Dat on 29 July 1966 and started hand repair of the airfield. Heavy equipment was flown in by C-130 on 31 July 1966. At the end of the reporting period the platoon was still engaged in repair of the runway.

During the reporting period, the Battalion (-) has been actively engaged in cantonment construction at Cu Chi, supporting the 25th Infantry Division. Company C is in support of the 1st Infantry at Long Thanh. The battalion was engaged in erecting prefabricated buildings, mess buildings, showers, latrines, roads, parking areas and hard stands.

The 362nd Engineer Company (LE) was attached to this organization on 25 April 1966. The battalion and 362nd was detached from the 159th Engineer Group (Const) and attached to the 79th Engineer Group (Const) on 20 July 1966 with no change in mission.

One platoon from Company A, 588th Engineer Battalion departed by convoy on 11 July 1966 to start on cantonment construction at Hoc Mon.

### 2. COMMANDERS RECOMMENDATIONS AND OBSERVATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED:

#### PART I, Observations (Lessons Learned)

- a. ITEM: Placing concrete.
- b. DISCUSSION: Two separate units working on post using the same mix of placing concrete on the same day. One unit's pad

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HEADQUARTERS  
588TH ENGINEER BATTALION (C)(A)  
APO 96353

EBB-CO

15 August 1966

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to 31 July 1966 (RCS CSGPO-28 (R-1))

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ANNEXES  
JUSTIFICATION

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1. SIGNIFICANT ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES: Battalion Headquarters and Headquarters Company completed their move from Phu Loi to Cu Chi, Vietnam by motor vehicle convoy on 1 May 1966.

On 301800 April 1966, this organization received a combat support mission of improving existing bridges along Route 1, 19, 22, and 26 to provide a one lane Class 60, all weather route between Cu Chi, Go Dau Ha and Tay Ninh. RVN

Company A was given the primary mission with one platoon from Company C, 588th Engineer Battalion attached. The 617th Engineer Company (Panel Bridge) and elements from the 65th Engineer Battalion (Infantry Division) were attached to the 588th Engineer Battalion for the operation. The combat support mission in support of operation Birmingham, started on 1 May 1966 and ended on 11 May 1966.

Upon completion of above mission, Company A returned to Phu Loi to load their equipment for the move to Cu Chi, which was completed on 14 May 1966.

On 6 June 1966 the personnel of Company B, 588th Engineer Battalion were assigned to Company C, 168th Engineer Battalion. The personnel of Company C, 168th Engineer Battalion were assigned to the 588th Engineer Battalion as Company B, 588th Engineer Battalion. One squad, Company B, 588th Engineer Battalion arrived Cu Chi 6 June 1966, one platoon 10 June 1966. The remainder of Company B closed Cu Chi from Long Binh, RVN on 20 June 1966 by motor vehicle convoy. Company B was employed constructing a 60 Bed Surgical Hospital.

On 16 May this organization sent one officer, one non-commissioned officer and two enlisted men to Di An to undergo training by a team from Department of the Army on tunnel destruction using an acetylene gas generating system for a period of five days. Upon completion of the training, the personnel were returned to the unit to further train eight additional personnel in tunnel destruction. One officer and twelve enlisted personnel were formed into a tunnel destruction team. On 14 June 1966, this battalion was given the mission of providing

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cracked while the other did not, although both units flooded their pads at approximately the same time.

c. OBSERVATION: The cracking was due mainly to the different moisture content in the laterite pads. Therefore prior to placing any concrete, the ground or pad should be thoroughly dampened just prior to placing concrete.

d. ITEM: Cutting of metal roofing material.


e. DISCUSSION: Since there is a large amount of metal roofing to be used on various buildings, the regular tin snips proved to be inadequate and time consuming.

f. OBSERVATION: The constructing unit solved this problem by using two cutting edges from a used grader blade. The two blades were bolted together at one end. The bottom blade was welded to a heavy metal base plate. A handle was welded to the top blade. The device works on the same principle as a paper cutter. It has proven to be a very satisfactory solution to the problem.

g. ITEM: Radio communication.

h. DISCUSSION: During this reporting period the battalion participated in a combat support operation ranging over 60 km of road. The radios of the battalion were again proven to be inadequate. The new family of radios used by the supporting infantry enabled this battalion to control the operation.

i. OBSERVATION: The new family of radios are far superior to the old radios. Recommend that the new family of radios be issued as soon as possible to all combat engineer units.

  
JAMES F. BOYLAN  
LTC, CE  
Commanding

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